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WAS THERE A RUSSIAN FASCISM? THE UNION OF RUSSIAN PEOPLE[1]

HANS ROGGER

AMONG the innovations which the revolution of 1905 produced in the political life of tsarist Russia, the appearance of a number of movements and parties on the right of the political spectrum was certainly one of the most novel. The point can be made that the entry of such groups onto the political scene marks a fundamental change in the relationship between the autocracy and the state on the one hand and the conservative sector of opinion on the other. The emergence of these groups marks both an unprecedented politicization of Russian conservatism and the splitting off from its main body of an extremist right wing more political-minded than traditional conservativism, which had tended to shun political action and to consider it either a prerogative of the state or the illegal activity of liberals and socialists. The post-1905 Right was more militant, more demagogic, more intransigent vis-à-vis the state and its officials than conservatives either wished or dared to be. In this period, traditional conservatism was characterized by intellectual poverty and an unwillingness to descend into the political arena. These characteristics stemmed not only from a distaste for politics and a reluctance to see the larger public become involved in it, not alone from the belief that the historic interests of the nation would best be protected by established institutions and their servants, but also from the genuinely conservative inclination not to bestir oneself, to leave things as they were, to let them take their course and hope that in time they would come out all right.[2]

The year 1905, and the unrest which had preceded it, destroyed the faith of conservatives in the ability of the state to defend both itself and them. It also made a continued attitude of political abstinence difficult to maintain. In the face of growing popular discontent and the increasingly successful efforts of liberal and revolutionary parties to convert this discontent into political capital, some way had to be found for supporters of the status quo to demonstrate that popular sentiment was not all on the side of the opposition and

[1] I would like to express my gratitude to the American Council of Learned Societies and the Institute of International Studies, University of California, for their support of my work.

[2] General surveys of the Russian Right (i.e., of parties to the right of the Octobrists and the Party of Peaceful Renovation), and of its origins in the pre-1905 period, are contained in the following: V. Levitskii, "Pravye partii," in L. Martov *et al.* (eds.), *Obshchestvennoe dvizhenie v Rossii s nachala XX veka* (St. Petersburg, 1914), III, 347–462; V. Mech, *Sily reaktsii* (Moscow, 1907); L-ch, "Momenty kontr-revoliutsii," in *Itogy i perspektivy* (Moscow, 1906); L. Slonimskii, "Nashi monarkhisty i ikh programmy," *Vestnik Evropy*, No. 5 (May 1907), pp. 250–72; V. N. Zalezhskii, *Monarkhisty* (2d ed.; Khar'kov, 1930); Horst Jablonowski, "Die russischen Rechtsparteien, 1905–1917," in *Russland Studien, Gedenkschrift für Otto Hötzsch* ("Schriftenreihe Osteuropa," No. 3 [Stuttgart, 1957]), pp. 43–55; N. D. Noskov, *Okhranitel'nye i reaktsionnye partii v Rossii* (St. Petersburg, 1906); see also my article, "The formation of the Russian Right, 1900–1906," in Nicholas Riasanovsky and Gleb Struve (eds.), *California Slavic studies*, III (Berkeley, Calif., 1964), 66–94.

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that the state could count on allies in society if only it would resist the headlong rush to concession and innovation. The efforts made in this direction before October 1905—the staging or encouraging of pogroms and the organization of a number of monarchist organizations, mostly of local scope—were not notably successful. They failed to transform sporadic outbursts of popular passion or dynastic loyalty into sustained or organized political action; they were uncertain of their aims in the face of the government's own uncertainty, and they did not prevent the issuance of the October Manifesto which, with its promise of civil liberties, political rights, and a popularly elected legislative duma, made it all the more necessary that conservatives abandon their self-imposed restraint and bring a broadly based movement into the field against the liberals and radicals who had organized themselves into political parties long before October 1905. The realization of the need for a party or movement which could counter the opposition and yet develop a popular appeal, a party which would be free of an upper-class or bureaucratic taint and would give at least the appearance of independence while playing the role of stabilizer in the political maelstrom—this realization, and the existence of a few centers of popular conservatism, led in October 1905 to the formation of the Union of Russian People (*Soiuz Russkogo Naroda*). It was to become the most successful, the most numerous, the most noisy, intransigent, extremist and, withal, the most important of the Russian right-wing parties. For some years it dominated its end of the political spectrum and made URP practically synonymous with Right.[3]

Its importance derives not only from the role which the Union of Russian People (URP) played in Russian life; indeed, the significance of the URP as an autonomous factor in Russian politics may be doubted, even if its appearance as a symptom of a changed relationship between the state and its defenders is admitted. The importance of the URP derives in large measure from its introduction of a style of right-wing politics which was as novel for Russia as it was for much of Europe, and which gained for the Union the dubious distinction of being called, in a recent American text, "Europe's first fascist organization."[4] It was this also which led a Soviet biographer of V. M. Purishkevich, a leading figure of the URP, to write of him in 1925 that he was a fascist who set the style ten years before fascism arose as a political movement.[5] Even to

[3] Russian journalists and political commentators of the period were not always very discriminating in their use of such terms as "right" or "conservative" and at times used them interchangeably. Thus, e.g., L. Martov's *Politicheskiia partii v Rossii* (St. Petersburg, 1906), p. 4, has this, not very helpful but inclusive, chapter heading: "Right reactionary-conservative parties." More often, distinctions were made (by Martov and others) between conservatives and the Right (sometimes called "extreme"), with the latter referred to as "Black Hundreds." But the "Black Hundreds" were not so much a specific political movement as perpetrators of antiliberal and antisocialist violence and Jewish pogroms. Since many members of the URP and its allies (the Monarchist party, the Union of Russian Men, the Kursk People's party, and others) were disposed to view such outbursts as justified expressions of popular indignation and to encourage them, it is not incorrect to include them under the general heading of "Black Hundredism" (*chernosotenstvo*). But *chernosotenstvo* was a broad, amorphous phenomenon and descriptive rather of outbursts of violence than of political organizations. During the period treated by this article, from the end of 1905 to the beginning of 1908, Right, extreme Right, and URP may be regarded as synonymous.

[4] Geoffrey Brunn and Victor S. Mamatey, *The world in the 20th century* (4th ed.; Boston, 1962), p. 891.

[5] S. B. Liubosh, *Russkii fashist Vl. Purishkevich* (Leningrad, 1925), p. 29.

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those who did not wish to claim this "first" for Russia or burden her with it, it appeared that the URP constituted an emphatic break with the language and behavior that had commonly been regarded as typical of defenders of autocracy, orthodoxy, and nationality. The movement has been described as a Russian fascism,[6] a forerunner of fascism,[7] and as a Russian version of national socialism,[8] while in its own time it was called a rebellion of reaction[9] and a revolution from the right which pretended to act on conservative principles.[10] This was the view of Sergei Witte, the author of the October Manifesto, who had particular cause to be bitter about the URP, not only because it called him a traitor for having "extorted" the manifesto from the emperor, but more specifically because its agents tried to assassinate him in 1907.[11] It was also the view of some members of the URP itself. One of the few intellectuals in the URP, a part-time university lecturer, Boris Nikol'ski, confided to a friend in 1905 that "to be a conservative at this time means to be at least a radical or, rather, a revolutionary."[12]

The essential question here becomes whether it was the radicalism, the element of rebellion and revolution, or the conservatism of the URP that was the pretense, or whether we are not confronted with an indecisive mixture of the two. The question becomes all the more interesting in view of the fact that the ideas and methods of the URP are thought to have had a "tangible and substantial" impact on the origins of German national socialism by way of Baltic and Russian emigrés who found themselves in Germany after the Bolshevik revolution.[13] In order, therefore, to be able to decide these questions and to determine whether there was a Russian fascism or national socialism *avant le mot,* it is necessary to have a closer look at the Union of Russian People, its origins, politics, and program.

To its proponents, the appearance of the URP in October 1905 always stood as a symbol of a national awakening which proceeded from the healthy national instincts of the healthy sectors of Russian society—that is, those who were not corrupted by Western liberal notions. It was the uncorrupted, not the educated, the privileged, the bureaucrats, the Westernized, who had come to the rescue of the state and imparted to it and its servants the determination to save themselves and their country. It had been the "grey and ignorant" popular masses who had first sensed the dangers which threatened the fatherland; only then had the classes, conscience-stricken over their former passivity, begun to join, to organize, to agitate, to stand up in word and deed.[14] The Union of Russian People, therefore, did not wish to be regarded as a political party, as an added element of division and contention, but as a spontaneous popular movement, as the people itself, a broadly based, mil-

[6] V. A. Maevskii, *Revoliutsioner-monarkhist; pamiati L'va Tikhomirova* (Novi Sad, 1934), pp. 74, 81.

[7] Alfred Levin, *The second duma* (New Haven, Conn., 1940), p. 27.

[8] G. P. Fedotov, "Russia and freedom," *Review of politics,* VII (1946), 31.

[9] "Zhurnal'noe obozrenie," *Russkaia Mysl',* XXVII, No. 5 (May 1906), p. 201.

[10] S. Iu. Vitte, *Vospominaniia,* ed. A. L. Sidorov (Moscow, 1960), I, 282–83.

[11] *Ibid.,* III, 414–40.

[12] Sh. M. Levin, "Materialy dlia kharakteristiki kontr-revoliutsii 1905 g.," *Byloe,* No. 21 (1923), p. 161.

[13] Walter Z. Laqueur, "Russia and Germany," *Survey* (London), No. 44–45 (Oct. 1962), p. 91.

[14] Ia. Demchenka, *Evreiskoe ravnopravie ili russkoe poraboshchenie* (2d ed.; Kiev, 1907), pp. 6–7.

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lion-voiced union for the defense of tsar, church, and fatherland.[15]

The enemies of the URP not only could not admit that it represented the nation or any significant number of its citizens; many of them saw in the new movement simply another concealed agency of the government, a pseudo-party called into being and maintained by the police department of the ministry of the interior. There was reason to doubt the genuineness and autonomy of an open, public organization which spoke on behalf of law and order against liberals and revolutionaries. The government had never encouraged independent political activity, not even on its own behalf, and the example of the *zubatovshchina,* the "police socialism" which in January 1905 had turned against its creators, was still fresh in people's minds. It seemed incredible that a discredited regime would not, after October 17, attempt to build a party for itself. This was, after all, what governments did everywhere when they wanted to influence opinion and the makeup of popularly elected assemblies. So thought a gendarme colonel who expressed his amazement to a member of the police department that nothing had been done to call into being a popular ally for the government in the coming elections to the duma. So thought others, then and later, who viewed the URP as a direct creation of the police or at best a screen for the reactionary elements among the landed classes.[16]

From what we know of the origins of the URP, the impetus for its formation came for the most part from outside. There were no concerted efforts on the part of the administration to create for itself a popular ally. Witte was against such efforts because he wished to demonstrate the government's faithful adherence to the new rules of politics. His reactionary colleague in the ministry of the interior, P. N. Durnovo, believed that parties would be neither necessary nor allowed, because in the duma every deputy would vote according to his conscience. No parties were needed for that.[17] Genuine or not, this naïveté was not shared by the head of the police department's political section, who was in touch with individual members of the scattered "patriotic" organizations that had sprung up in the recent past. There was the Moscow Society of Religious Banner-Carriers and the Moscow Volunteer Okhrana; there was the St. Petersburg Russian Assembly (a patriotic organization of upper-class complexion, which was to furnish a hall for the early meetings of the URP and also supply some of its leaders) and a St. Petersburg circle of patriotic students; there were

[15] Leader from *Moskovskie Vedomosti* (No. 131), quoted in "Vnutrennee obozrenie," *Vestnik Evropy,* No. 8 (Aug. 1907), p. 751. See also *Russkii Vestnik,* LI, No. 5 (May 1906), p. 330; and *Russkoe Znamia,* Nos. 212 and 365 (1906), quoted by Sherman D. Spector, "The doctrine and program of the Union of Russian People in 1906" (unpublished Master's thesis, Russian Institute, Columbia University, 1952), p. 89. No absolutely reliable statistics on URP membership are available. URP sources mention anywhere from 900 to 3,500 branches and from 600,000 to 3,000,000 members. It is impossible to tell what the basis for these figures is and what criteria were used in arriving at them. The maximum estimated by a hostile student of the Right is about 100 branches with 10,000–20,000 members (Levitskii, "Pravye partii," p. 406). If accurate, this would be evidence of considerable organized strength. There is no doubt that the URP was numerically and organizationally the strongest of the rightist parties until it split.

[16] Levin, *Second duma,* p. 27; O. O. Gruzenberg, *Vchera* (Paris, 1928), p. 133; V. P. Viktorov and A. Chernovskii (eds.), *Soiuz russkogo naroda* (Moscow-Leningrad, 1929), pp. 8, 84.

[17] Vitte, *Vospominaniia,* III, 356–57; Alexander Gerassimoff, *Der Kampf gegen die erste russische Revolution; Erinnerungen,* trans. E. Thalmann (Leipzig, 1934), p. 80.

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merchants, priests, and a union of teamsters; there were workers, shop clerks, cabmen, bathhouse attendants, and tradesmen.[18] At their meetings, there was also an occasional detective[19] and, above all, there was Dr. A. I. Dubrovin.

Dubrovin, a man of obscure antecedents, variously said to have given up a poor or a profitable medical practice, was a member of the St. Petersburg Russian Assembly and in touch also with the Moscow Banner-Carriers and other groups; it was he who helped bring them together and who emerged as the first chairman of the Union of Russian People, founded on October 22, 1905.[20] Dubrovin had been in contact also with a representative of the police department and the commander of the St. Petersburg Military District, but the official and the officer seem to have played only an auxiliary role. They encouraged Dubrovin; possibly they supported him in other ways; they, and some of their superiors, were probably glad to see such an organization come into being, but the URP cannot be said to have been their creation. The belief that it was stems from the irrefutable fact that at a later date the government supported the URP financially. At its inception, and, indeed, during the first months of its existence, the URP appears to have received no substantial help from the government, if any, and its financial support came mainly from members and well-wishers.[21] Its following was also the most "democratic" that had yet been assembled on the Right. While this was not fully reflected in its original leaders who comprised engineers, lawyers, merchants, salesmen, a cattle-dealer, landowners, ex-officers, a magistrate and others, the URP had more claim to call itself an all-class organization than any of its predecessors on the Right, where titles, bureaucratic and military rank had figured prominently.[22] The social composition of its membership is difficult to determine from the available evidence, but even its enemies agreed that besides the *Lumpenproletariat* and disgruntled petty bourgeois, it was, in its early years, able to attract genuine peasant and proletarian elements.[23] In terms of its origin, the URP was indubitably something new and not irrevocably pledged to power and privilege. How the URP would interpret the interests of the Russian state and nation, for whose defense it had come into being, remained to be seen.

If independence of the government, financial and otherwise, is to be taken as a test of the Union's being an autonomous force on the Russian political scene and of its ability to strike out in new directions, it did not long pass that test. From the time that the government's hopes in the conservative instincts of the peasantry were disappointed by the elections to the first duma in March and April 1906 and the

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[18] Boris Nikol'skii, "Dnevnik," *Krasnyi Arkhiv,* No. 63 (1934), II, 88; L. A. Tikhomirov, "25 let nazad; iz dnevnika L. Tikhomirova," *ibid.,* No. 40 (1930), p. 84; Levitskii, "Pravye partii," pp. 380–83, 394, 408.

[19] Nikol'skii, "Dnevnik," p. 87.

[20] *Ibid.,* p. 88; Vikotorov and Chernovskii, *Soiuz,* pp. 29, 34.

[21] *Ibid.,* pp. 35–37; S. E. Kryzhanovskii, *Vospominaniia* (Berlin, 1938), pp. 100–103; V. I. Gurko, *Features and figures of the past—government and opinion in the reign of Nicolas II,* ed. J. E. Wallace Sterling *et al.,* trans. Laura Matveev (Stanford, Calif., 1939), p. 435.

[22] Viktorov and Chernovskii, *Soiuz,* p. 32; Spector, "Doctrine and program," p. 23.

[23] Levitskii, "Pravye Partii," pp. 410–12; *Vestnik Narodnoi Svobody,* No. 33/34, Aug. 30, 1907, cols. 1569–70, and No. 30, Oct. 1, 1906, col. 1627; Viktorov and Chernovskii, *Soiuz,* pp. 374, 395; K. Avgustovskii, "V soiuze russkogo naroda," *Sovremennyi Mir,* IX, part 2 (1907), pp. 61–63.

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return of a solid oppositional majority, the administration gave various kinds of support to the URP. Most importantly, this took the form of financial subsidies to support its activities and publications. This was openly admitted by both donors and recipients afterward, though vigorously denied at the time.[24] The reasons for the government's denial are not far to seek: it wanted to appear to be above the political battle; it was also supporting the Octobrists, whom the URP fought, and, more importantly, it was not at all convinced of the advisability of supporting the URP. In this, as in so many other things, the administration was of divided mind, and even when it felt itself most threatened and most in need of aid from some social force, it was deeply distrustful of this rambunctious ally. S. E. Kryzhanovskii, Stolypin's associate in the ministry of the interior from 1906 to 1911, who handled financial disbursements to the URP and similar organizations, thought that these had adopted almost the same social program and propaganda techniques as the revolutionary parties. Indeed, he recalled in his memoirs that both Right and Left shared an economic and social program which promised the redistribution of private property to the masses; in the case of the Right it was to be carried out in the name of the autocratic tsar as the representative of the nation's interests and the defender of the poor from plutocratic oppression.[25]

It is hard to see how such a reading of the URP's intentions could arise on the part of a presumably well-informed official, though it was not infrequent among members of the URP.[26] It shows that the belief in the organization's essential conservatism was not universally shared, in spite of its commitment early in 1906 to the protection of private and public property and the avoidance of all violent means of political struggle. The conviction of the Union's radicalism must be presumed to stem from its attacks on the officials of the tsar, the bureaucrats, who were not serving him and the nation faithfully but usurping his power; from its denunciations of privilege, wealth, the ministries, the landlord class and, on occasion, the hierarchy of the church; from its promises to work for an increase in the holdings of land-poor peasants; from its expressed concern for the laboring classes in general and the hard plight of industrial workers in particular and the suggestion that relations between employers and employees be regulated legally.[27] Nor was all of this pretense. There were branches and members of the URP who took their "populism" seriously, and when, as a result of this, the subsidies were no longer forthcoming, there was often an increase of vehemence, especially at the local level,

[24] Kryzhanovskii, *Vospominaniia,* pp. 155–57; Interrogation of N. E. Markov in P. E. Shchegolev, ed., *Padenie tsarskogo rezhima* (Leningrad, 1926), VI, 179; "Obshchestvennaia khronika," *Vestnik Evropy,* No. 2 (Feb. 1907), p. 889.

[25] Kryzhanovskii, *Vospominaniia,* pp. 153–54.

[26] Avgustovskii in *Sovremenny Mir,* pp. 61 ff.; and P. Timofeev, "V chainoi SRN," *Russkoe bogatstvo,* No. 2 (Feb. 1907), pp. 76–77.

[27] V. Ivanovich, *Rossiiskiia partii, soiuzy i ligi* (St. Petersburg, 1906), pp. 118–22, contains the SRN program of early 1906; for attacks on the rich, the educated, and the powerful see Spector, "Doctrine and program," p. 54 (against liberalism in the church hierarchy); Ivan Kashkarov, "Kak sanovniki podryvaiut Samoderzhavnuiu vlast'," *Mirnyi Trud,* No. 7 (Sep. 1906), pp. 171–95, on bureaucratic subversion of imperial authority; V. N. Zalezhskii, *Monarkhisty* (2d ed.; Khar'kov, 1930), p. 26, has examples of denunciations of ministers and of demands for the accountability of all public servants; "Khronika vnutrennei zhizni," *Russkoe bogatstvo,* No. 4 (Apr. 1908), p. 66, cites SRN attacks on judicial authorities, higher educational institutions, and ecclesiastical seminaries and academies for helping to undermine authority. The examples could be multiplied.

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where members were not always governed by the conduct of the URP's central organs.[28]

Like the government, the URP was not at one with itself on the issue of their mutual relations, and, with time, Dubrovin lost out to Purishkevich as the main recipient of official favors because the former refused to be reasonable. Purishkevich, it was said, had more sense and tact.[29] As late as July 1908, when the revolutionary danger had receded and the government was firmly in control, Dubrovin insisted that revolution had merely fled from the streets into the palaces and mansions. This was to him the meaning of Stolypin's collaboration with the Octobrists in the third duma.[30] The appearance of radical intransigence, whether it came from the head or the heart, was an intrinsic part of the URP's appeal, and that is why its leaders denied from the tribune of the duma that they were virtually pensioners of the state, and that is why the accusation was made.[31] But ministerial support was neither reliable nor adequate; it was never the expression of a definite commitment and it never made the financial situation of the URP secure.[32] It probably helped to tame and to moderate the extreme Right; it helped also to split and thereby to weaken it; it did not make it fully obedient or reliable.

This was most evident at the provincial level where national platforms were less important than local issues and where the relationship with the authorities took quite different forms than it did at the center. Here, in certain areas, particularly in provinces of mixed population where national and religious conflicts embittered existing political differences, the extreme Right found a broad scope for its activities. Here they could most easily be represented as being a defense of Russian national interests against Polish landlords and clerics, against Jewish traders and intellectuals, against Armenian nationalists. In such situations, the extremism of the URP, which took the form of street violence, strike-breaking, economic boycotts, and the organization of paramilitary organizations (such as the "Yellow shirts" in Odessa and secret combat groups, the *druzhiny,* which are reminiscent of the *fasci di combattimento*), could find a measure of approval among those of the local population and authorities who shared the Union's prejudices. The governor of Ekaterinoslav *guberniia,* for example, felt constrained to complain in March 1907 to the ministry of the interior about a captain of gendarmes whose "fanatic devotion to nationalistic and patriotic ideals" had not only led him to extend his protection to local branches of the URP but also to take a stand on the land and working-class questions which was dangerously close to that of the leftist parties and had gained for him a considerable influence among the workers. Altogether, the governor noted, the local authorities of his province were in too intimate relations with members of the URP and indulgent toward their less savory activities. The captain was transferred to another prov-

[28] Avgustovskii, in *Sovremennyi Mir,* pp. 63–66, 72; Viktorov and Chernovskii, *Soiuz,* pp. 379–80, 398–99.

[29] Kryzhanovskii, *Vospominaniia,* p. 156.

[30] Viktorov and Chernovskii, *Soiuz,* pp. 401–3.

[31] Shchegolev, *Padenie,* VI, 179.

[32] At an Aug. 20, 1907, session of the council of the SRN, its treasury was described as almost empty and the further existence of its newspaper, *Russkoe Znamia,* called in question (see *Vestnik Narodnoi Svovobody,* No. 33/34, Aug. 30, 1907, col. 1568; and Alfred Levin, "The reactionary tradition in the election campaign to the third duma," *Oklahoma State University Publication,* LIX, No. 16 [June 1, 1962], p. 13).

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ince.[33] It was not always that easy, and not all governors (or town commandants and chiefs of police) were as convinced as this one that the URP was deficient in its conservatism or necessarily disturbed by that fact, as long as they approved of the URP's targets. On such matters as the strict enforcement of restrictions on the Jewish population, in the proper celebration of patriotic festivals and resistance to "alien" economic oppression, in the spreading of loyal and nationalist propaganda and in its electoral activity, the URP could afford to go quite far and still count on a measure of support, or at least benevolent neutrality, from local authorities in such important places as St. Petersburg (von der Launitz), Odessa (Tolmachev and Kaulbars), Yalta (Dumbadze), Kiev (Veretennikov) and others.[34]

The danger implicit in rousing the latent anarchist and revolutionary instincts of Russia's lower classes, even if they could be directed against approved targets, soon became worrisome to most of the Union's supporters at all levels of government, and from 1908–1909 those sections of society and the bureaucracy who had once supported or been favorable to it began to recoil from it with something approaching horror. The URP was not, after all, as an English journalist suggested at the time, a Russian version of the Primrose League,[35] but something much more frightening, something that no matter how inspired or motivated initially, was too uncomfortably like the many outbursts of resentment, envy, and social protest that throughout Russian history had taken the form of a "senseless and merciless Russian rising" (Pushkin), and that one could not be sure of controlling once it had been set in motion.[36] As a prominent rightist, V. V. Shul'gin, who eventually parted company with the URP over this issue, was to put it later: "A Jewish pogrom is the beginning of anarchy all around. It is the beginning of the so-called 'black rebellion.' They will begin with the Jews, but they will most certainly end by knocking out all there is of culture, and by smashing that which with such very great labour we have succeeded in setting up."[37] It is this viewpoint also which led him ultimately to desert the government itself over the Beilis ritual murder trial which the URP and its allies had persuaded the ministers of justice and interior to stage in 1913. The Russian ruling class was not prepared to intrust the defense of its interests to a movement whose shock troops were recruited from the bottom of the social ladder by appeals to their grievances.

One indication of the ultimate direction the URP might take came from the concentration of much of its propaganda on the liberals and the Constitutional Democratic party as the country's

[33] Viktorov and Chernovskii, *Soiuz,* p. 391.

[34] Levin, "The reactionary tradition," p. 25; Gerassimoff, *Der Kampf,* pp. 212, 216; A. A. Kizevetter, *Na rubezhe dvukh stoletii* (Prague, 1929), p. 508; L. Bernstein, *Les Cent Noires ou les nationalistes russes* (Paris, 1907), pp. 43–48.

[35] Rothay Reynolds, *My Russian year* (London, 1913), p. 139, speaks of numbers of "nice" Russian women who joined the URP—"just as numbers of nice English women become members of the Primrose League,"—but then became dismayed by its terrorist methods and the ruffians in its midst.

[36] Gurko, *Features and figures,* pp. 436–37: "In normal times, no government should use methods employed by revolutionists, for in its hands such methods become double-edged weapons. But during times of revolutionary unrest, when the people are in the grip of mass psychosis, the government must support individual organizations that spring up to support it. In 1905 the URP was such an organization."

[37] From "The sleeping car," a section of *Tri Stolitsy,* translated by Bernard Pares in *The Slavonic and east European review,* V, No. 15 (Mar. 1927), p. 475.

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worst enemies because they were nearest the levers of real power and gave the appearance of respectability. "The Kadet party," wrote a URP pamphleteer in 1907, "is the most dangerous and the most powerful of all our parties"; its members are mostly rich people; a large number of them have titles and large estates; there are many ex-bureaucrats in their midst, an equally large number of lawyers, not a few charlatan professors and rich merchants. "They all have too much money and free time." That was the explanation for their interest in politics. The socialists, whether Social Revolutionaries or Social Democrats, were not by themselves a real threat; they merely did the bidding of the more powerful secret forces (Jewish and/or liberal) standing behind them.[38] On socialist subservience to liberal command the URP was not, however, consistent, for it threatened at times to join forces with the socialists either to torpedo the duma or as the only way to beat the Kadets (from whom, supposedly, the socialists were indistinguishable) at the polls.[39] On the party's proscription lists, liberal politicians figured prominently; two Kadet deputies, Iollos and Gertsenshtein, fell victim to URP assassins, as did the laborite (*trudovik*) Karavaev; attempts on Miliukov, Gessen, and Witte failed.[40] The Octobrists were also berated for their compromising stands and their defense of big-business interests,[41] but the heavier fire of URP propaganda was directed against the Kadets, and those ubiquitous allies of liberalism—wealth and cunning. For moderation the URP, like other extremists, had little tolerance.

While the URP both stirred up and made use of envy, fear, and mass passions, and although this was quite novel and daring for a party which proclaimed its commitment to the forces of law and order and bears a striking resemblance to tactics employed by right-wing extremists elsewhere, none of this could be said to amount to a program. And to build more than a loose, ephemeral association, to build an effective movement, some kind of program, the setting of certain goals, either very specific or very general goals, is necessary. It was very difficult for the URP to develop such a program. It had, after all, come into being to defend the state, the monarchy, and the church at a time of dissolution and disorder, so that at least with part of its being it was dedicated to the preservation of the status quo. On the other hand, its very existence and nature were also testimony to the belief that the state was no longer a healthy organism, that it had been infected with the liberal virus and had to be saved from itself by the truly Russian elements of the population. And these, it was implied more than once, were not to be found near the top of the social ladder. It was simple burghers (*meshchane*) and peasants who were the true Russia.[42] The problem is further complicated by the fact that it is difficult to tell who, if anyone, could speak with authority on behalf of the organization as a whole. In spite of elaborate rules designed to as-

[38] B. V. Nazarevskii, *Osnovy parlamentskogo stroia* (Moscow, 1907), pp. 16–18; and Levitskii, "Pravye partii," p. 402.

[39] P. N. Miliukov, *Vospominaniia* (New York, 1955), I, 421, and *Vestnik Narodnoi Svobody*, No. 6, Feb. 8, 1907, col. 431.

[40] Viktorov and Chernovskii, *Soiuz*, p. 87; Gruzenberg, *Vchera*, p. 133; "Chernosotenstvo," in *Bol'shaia sovetskaia èntsiklopediia*, LXI (Moscow, 1934), 356, also mentions the Bolshevik Bauman as a victim of URP assassins.

[41] Spector, "Doctrine and program," pp. 35, 38, 40; Levitskii, "Pravye partii," p. 445; Viktorov and Chernovskii, *Soiuz*, pp. 401–3.

[42] Mech, *Sily reaktsii*, p. 85; Timofeev in *Russkoe Bogatstvo*, p. 76.

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sure unity and control of branches from the center, there was neither unity nor unanimity, and even within certain branches there were important and unresolved differences on aims and policies. The URP was never a monolith, and after 1908 it split first into two and then three different organizations.[43] These might still collaborate at the local level or even in the duma, but the extreme Right could no longer claim to speak with a single voice. Even when it had appeared to do so, the political, economic, and social aims of the URP had not been distinguished for system, coherence, or consistency. Ideologically, the extreme Right in Russia was not much of an advance over Russian conservatism, certainly not in the political parts of its program.

In its dedication to the autocracy as a God-given, historically justified and proven, popularly approved institution, the URP constituted no break with the past. But unlike other parties of the Right (the Monarchists, for example) it did not think autocracy incompatible with an assembly of elected people's representatives. On the contrary, such an assembly, in loyal union with the supreme power and informing it of the people's needs, could only strengthen autocracy. It would make possible the closer supervision of a bureaucracy which tsar and nation distrusted and which was at one and the same time too arbitrary in its treatment of the people and too receptive to the liberal views that had spread among the upper classes.[44] This view of the duma as a latter-day Assembly of the Land (*zemskii sobor*) and of the manifesto which created it as returning to the people a part of their rights, the expectation that it would diminish the ministerial-bureaucratic regime which stood between tsar and people, did not long outlast the failure of the Union and the whole of the Right in the elections to the first two dumas—there were no rightist deputies at all in the first and some ten (out of a total of 518) in the second.[45]

In the second duma, URP deputies had bent every effort to undermine the assembly's work from within and without by creating scandals, siding with the Left, trying to keep the duma from any productive work, and organizing a campaign of letters and telegrams to the emperor asking for its dissolution. Doubts were now expressed as to whether the October Manifesto and the duma as constituted were after all compatible with autocracy, whether they did not infringe its rights and prerogatives and whether, in fact, the monarch had had the right to share what he had inherited intact from his ancestors.[46]

Dedication to undiminished autocracy and hostility to the duma which had been granted, or rather ordered, by the autocrat placed the URP in an extremely awkward position. If it fought against the duma for a restoration of the sovereign's full rights, it admitted what it had long denied: that the October Manifesto was, in fact, a constitutional document and that by issuing it the monarch had limited and shared his power. To attack the manifesto would mean to go against his expressed will and against the decrees creating the new institutions which he had vowed to

[43] See the testimony by Markov in Shchegolev, *Padenie*, VI, 176–77.

[44] N. D. Noskov, *Okhranitel'nye i reaktsionnye partii*, p. 40; *Russkii Vestnik*, LI, No. 3 (Mar. 1906), p. 305. See also N. E. Markov, *Voiny temnykh sil* (Paris, 1928), p. 129.

[45] Levin, *Second duma*, p. 67; Levitskii, "Pravye partii," p. 460.

[46] G. V. Butmi, *Rossiia na rasput'i: kabala ili svoboda?* (8th ed.; St. Petersburg, 1906), pp. 33–34.

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maintain. To fight the tsar's government in the name of the tsar seemed impossible, and to suggest that he had been tricked into making unnecessary concessions by unscrupulous advisers (such as Witte) was not very flattering. It was possible, however, to try to convert the duma into something else by changing the electoral law. Once that was done, and the oppositionist majorities safely reduced, it would be possible to live with the quasi-constitutional regime created in 1905 and 1906 and strive to keep alive sound sentiments and organized strength for a time of need. And the best arena for doing so, according to N. E. Markov, the URP's leader after Dubrovin, was the parliamentary one.[47] This was no principled commitment to the idea of representative government; but unless the extreme Right were willing to go unequivocally into opposition, deny itself the platform of the duma, and risk losing what governmental favors it might obtain by offering or withholding votes, there was no other way. So the extreme Right, represented at the opening of the third duma by fifty-one deputies (of whom at least thirty-two, headed by Purishkevich and Markov, belonged formally to the URP), joined sixty-five other deputies of the duma's right wing in an address to the emperor which thanked him for having, through the duma, re-established the long-desired and long-broken union of people and sovereign.[48]

The problem of a legislative body which implied by its very existence a diminution of autocracy was simply ignored by speaking of it in terms that were meant to evoke the image of the Muscovite assembly of estates, the purely consultative *zemskii sobor,* without specifically demanding a change of the fundamental laws of 1906 and the duma's functions. Purishkevich, for example, before the elections to the third duma, gave no indication that he was against the institution as such; he merely insisted that unlike its predecessors it be composed of loyal, non-revolutionary elements; otherwise it too would be dissolved.[49] Dubrovin, who along with other elements of the URP had wished to boycott the elections, saw the flaw in this position. He opposed the third duma as he had the second, arguing that instead of bringing the tsar and his people closer, it would erect between them still another barrier. It would be better, his side argued, if the duma were entirely oppositional. Then the question of its true nature would have to be faced and the fundamental laws changed to make it a purely advisory body. Dubrovin withdrew his own candidacy, though this may have been due to fear of failure; he and other opponents of participation in the elections were told by their rightist friends that this meant opposing the will of the tsar.[50] Markov himself, in the emigration, seems to have been converted to Dubrovin's view when he said that the opening of the third duma in the autumn of 1907 marked the beginning of the constitutional period of Russia's history and the preparation for revolution and final defeat.[51] But to an investigating commission of the provisional government in 1917 he insisted that, unlike Dubrovin, he and his wing of the URP had accepted the duma as proposed in October

[47] Markov, *Voiny temnykh sil,* pp. 134–35.

[48] For the text of the address see *Vestnik narodnoi svobody,* No. 46, Nov. 25, 1907, cols. 1980–81; for the electoral statistics, Levin, "Reactionary tradition," p. 45.

[49] *Ibid.,* p. 32.

[50] *Ibid.,* pp. 31–32; Viktorov and Chernovskii, *Soiuz,* 402–3; A. S. Izgoev, "Pered tretei Dumoi," *Russkaia Mysl',* XXVIII, No. 10 (Oct. 1907), p. 210.

[51] Markov, *Voiny temnykh sil,* p. 138.

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1905 and had worked within its rules to strengthen the monarch's powers.[52]

The splits within the URP and the muddying of the issues of the duma and the imperial prerogative reflected deep uncertainties on both scores. It is certainly accurate to say that the URP was against parliamentary government, against party politics and the infringement of the emperor's authority. These were the devices which it had inscribed on its banners, but it does not appear to have done so with any confident assurance or belief in their essential rightness or political value. The very arguments for which the whole Right embraced autocracy—firm leadership above factions; the interests of the whole nation given impartial expression by one man; restoration of the communion between ruler and ruled and the restraint of rapacious and selfish officials—were each undermined by the character and conduct of the occupant of the throne. The autocratic principle is hardest to uphold in the abstract, and the entire Right realized with despair that Nicholas was its worst possible embodiment. Viewed in that light, the many petitions and loyal addresses to Nicholas, insisting that the fulness of power was still his to use as he saw fit, sound rather like anxious pleas than confident assertions, sound more like wishes than statements of fact. What other meaning could petitions for the "restoration" of autocracy have when all along the insistence had been that it had never ceased to exist? There were even threats that the people would not stand for its surrender.[53] The hope was for firm and decisive leadership from some source, even for a military dictatorship exercised not by, but in the name of, the tsar; autocracy seems to have been the weak, traditional formula used to describe the object of that hope.[54]

Lev Tikhomirov, the erstwhile revolutionary turned speaker and pamphleteer for the URP and other rightist groups, remarked in February 1906 that it would be better to admit once and for all that the autocracy was gone than to compromise it further by quarrels over how much of it was left intact, especially since the tsar himself furnished no clear answer to the question and made contradictory statements to different deputations. He either could not or would not speak out. Without him, the 1905 revolution would not have taken place; with him, there was not much hope for the cause of autocracy.[55] The view was even expressed that no government at all would be better than the present one; presumably, its disappearance would relieve the extreme Right of much embarrassment and free it for truly militant action.[56] There were rumors that the Right disliked the emperor even more than did the Left and that there were those in its midst who wished to be rid of him.[57]

[52] Shchegolev, *Padenie,* VI, 175.

[53] One deputation to the tsar, whose spokesman was Boris Nikol'skii of the URP, was so insistent on this point that the ministry of the court prohibited the publication of his address to the emperor. See Levin, "Materialy," *Byloe,* No. 21 (1923), pp. 168–69, 184; W. W. Schulgin (V. V. Shul'gin), *Tage; Memoiren aus der russischen Revolution,* ed. George v. Reutern, trans. Marissa von Reutern (Berlin, 1928), pp. 219–23, describes the visit of the Volhynian branch of the URP to the emperor and its petition for the retention of autocracy.

[54] Levitskii, "Pravye partii," p. 422; Lev Tikhomirov in *Krasnyi Arkhiv,* No. 61 (1933), p. 103.

[55] *Ibid.,* No. 41/42 (1930), pp. 130–32. In a letter of July 2, 1906, Nikol'skii referred to Nicholas as an idiot and predicted that the dynasty would be removed "in the Serbian manner" by Siberian officers (Levin, "Materialy," p. 185).

[56] Levitskii, "Pravye partii," p. 422.

[57] S. R. Mintslov, *Petersburg v 1903–1910 god-*

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The autocrat could not be relied upon to uphold autocracy, and in the normal course of events no one else could play that role; Stolypin, the only possible candidate for the role of strong man, wished to co-operate with the duma and free himself of dependence on the Right. Thus there was little left to do, short of creating a revolutionary opposition, but to play the abhorrent game of politics for whatever benefits it might bring, supplement it with direct action where that seemed promising, and hope in this fashion to exercise some pressure on the government and even, though this was not made explicit, on the tsar. Deprived of the possibility of a sweeping indictment of the existing political and social order, unwilling to go into true opposition, most of the URP came by the autumn of 1907 to a factual acceptance of the situation created by the October Manifesto and the fundamental laws of 1906. And in that situation of political contest it faced again what had been a most troublesome question from its inception—the content of its social and economic program.

Nothing illustrates better both the genuinely popular complexion of the membership which the Union had been able to attract and the problems this created for its leaders than the discussions which took place at the fourth Congress of the United Russian People in April 1907 at a time when the second duma, even more oppositionist than the first, was in session. Attended by some 500 delegates of the URP and allied organizations, of student clubs and workingmen's guilds, the congress, when it turned to the discussion of the program to be adopted, was barely kept by its organizers from disintegrating in a violent burst of dissension. The peasant members, spurred on by the fanatic monk Iliodor, who took his own words so seriously that his ecclesiastical superiors were ordered by the government to discipline him, demanded the compulsory alienation (with compensation) of private lands and proposed a delegation to the tsar to submit this demand to him. Worker delegates succeeded in having their demands and grievances incorporated in a resolution that had to be carefully edited behind the scenes in order to cleanse it of its socialist overtones. Altogether, it appears that the leadership was hard put to it to restrain its followers, though we cannot be sure that it was unanimous in wishing to do so. Its original intention of having the congress ask for a dictatorship was quite lost sight of in the stress which the resolutions adopted put on social and economic issues. A direct confrontation of the agrarian question, which the peasants had so insistently raised, was avoided only by a compromise which admitted the need for more land but reserved a final solution to the emperor and a *zemskii sobor,* to be drawn from all estates of the Orthodox Russian population with one peasant representing each *uezd.* In the meantime, the administration was asked to take all possible measures to keep peasant lands from passing into the possession of other classes, of ethnic non-Russians and Jews, to assist resettlement and to extend liberal agrarian credits. While the peasant commune was to be preserved as the only safeguard against landlessness, peasant farmsteads were to be individually owned within the commune. Exit from it was possible if the allotment was sold to the com-

akh (Riga, 1931), pp. 111, 231; Vitte, *Vospominania,* II, 555.

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mune or to one of its members.[58] How a *zemskii sobor* could be summoned without a change in the fundamental laws which had intrusted the duma and the council of state with all legislative activity was not made clear. Nor did the political resolution, which asked for conversion of the duma into a purely consultative organ, explain whether it was to continue to exist alongside an assembly of estates. A change in the electoral law was also demanded: deputies should be chosen by a combination of election, lot, and imperial appointment.[59]

The coming electoral campaign for the third duma, and reports from provincial branches that the Union was losing peasant support[60] because its agrarian program failed to meet the needs even of the most moderate and well-disposed peasants, led to no revisions of the URP stand on the peasant question. A July 1907 meeting of chairmen of provincial and district branches of the URP and allied parties again recognized the peasant need for land but held that it must be met in a just, peaceful, and lawful way, without damage to the rights of other classes, with full regard to local conditions and the laws regarding private property. This was even vaguer than the April congress had been. Concern for workers and lower-level employees was expressed in a demand for legislation to improve their lot, again with proper attention to the "unshakable rights of property."[61] On this issue, too, the April congress had at least been more specific: the softened resolution it finally adopted spoke of the situation of the working classes as especially difficult, of poor working conditions in shops and factories; mentioned unemployment, the need for old-age pensions, factory legislation, and inspection. Blame for this parlous state of affairs was, it is true, placed primarily on foreign employers and Jews, but in its general tone the resolution was far less cautious than it was on the question of land. In the unequal battle between capital and labor, the state and the URP were to assist the Russian worker and craftsman by the organization of marketing organizations, the provision of credit, mutual aid societies (with, of course, purely economic goals), and remedial legislation.[62]

The URP always found it easier to sound an anticapitalist and anti-industrial note than an antilandlord one, since capitalism, industry, the whole mysterious world of finance and business could be represented as being in essence un-Russian, of benefit only to Jews and foreigners, and could even be held responsible in a vague way for the agrarian problem. There were denunciations of the government's financial conservatism; demands for easy credit and a paper ruble not backed by gold—"for the issue of paper notes depends on the will of the Tsar and the needs of the people"[63]—for state capital to aid Russian entrepreneurs in their battle against foreigners and Jews, for making the state bank independent of foreign money markets, and for including in its directorate representatives of small and large trade and industry.[64] But here, too, there was no fundamental challenge to the economic system of the country, and there could not be without seeming to embrace parts of the socialist program. Attacks on the Jews were the surrogate

[58] *Vestnik narodnoi svobody*, No. 20, May 24, 1907, cols. 1227–28.
[59] *Ibid.*, col. 1223.
[60] *Ibid.*, No. 33/34, Aug. 30, 1907, col. 1569.
[61] *Ibid.*, No. 39/40, Aug. 2, 1907, col. 1481.
[62] *Ibid.*, No. 20, May 24, 1907, cols. 1228–32.
[63] Butmi, *Rossiia na rasput'i*, p. 44; see also Mech, *Sily reaktsii*, p. 86.
[64] *Ruskii Vestnik*, LI, No. 11 (Nov. 1906), p. 315.

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for a frontal attack on capitalism because of the role they were said to play in the national economy. They were to be eliminated from it as fully as possible, by legislation, economic boycott, and finally by expulsion to Palestine.[65]

The electoral law of June 3, 1907, which had been promulgated by decree after the dissolution of the second duma, was designed to assure for its successor a more loyal and conservative representation. This was achieved by the weighting of votes on the basis of property qualifications, by a further division of the electorate into curias and (in certain localities) nationality groups, as well as by a complex electoral procedure by stages. The outcome was, from the government's point of view, a vast improvement, but it was hardly a triumph for the URP and its allies, who elected fifty-one deputies or 11.5 per cent of the total duma membership.[66] The new electoral law made a special appeal to the economic and social grievances of workers and peasants less urgent than had been the case earlier, a fact which may account for the more moderate tone adopted by the July congress as compared with that of April. The increasing conservatism of the URP in these areas manifested itself in a variety of ways. Its leaders in the duma, Markov and Purishkevich, although they were still capable of shrill attacks on "liberal" ministers, Jews, the universities, and the press, came to a *modus vivendi* with the government and the conservatives in the duma, moved closer to the organization of landowners, the Congress of the United Nobility, and further away from their erstwhile leader, Dr. Dubrovin. Both men established their own organizations. Purishkevich's called itself the Union of the Archangel Michael, and in certain localities the Union of Russian People of the Archangel Michael; Markov retained the name, much of the membership, and the organizational apparatus of the URP. Dr. Dubrovin was left with a splinter and the organization's newspaper *Russkoe Znamia;* a small number of branches, apparently the more "radical" ones, stayed with him. But he had not sufficient character or funds to retain a following of real consequence; none of the duma deputies appears to have remained loyal to him. He tried to suggest in *Russkoe Znamia,* and with the help of scattered individuals and branches, that he alone was carrying on the tradition of a truly popular monarchism against those who had sold out to the powers that be.[67] After 1908, his was a barely audible voice. After that date the organization which he had created lost in importance and numbers in all its sectors. The country was tired of being exhorted; and the government, thanks to Stolypin, once again felt firm ground under its feet.

It seems beyond dispute that the URP was not politically, socially, or economically radical. What made it appear to be so in Russian conditions was its willingness to employ a degree of violence and the fact that, unlike earlier defenders of autocracy, orthodoxy, and nationality, the URP realized that in the conditions created by 1905, resistance to political liberalization had to find support in broader strata of the population and therefore take some account of their

[65] Mech, *Sily reaktsii,* p. 86; *Vestnik narodnoi svobody,* No. 20 (May 24, 1907), col. 1235; Bernstein, *Les Cent Noirs,* pp. 9–12; Levin, "The reactionary tradition," pp. 18–19.

[66] *Ibid.,* p. 45.

[67] N. Zhedenov, *Margarinovye monarkhisty* (St. Petersburg, 1912); *Vasileostrovtsy o glavnosovetchikakh; k vserossiiskomu s'ezdu SRN v g. Moskve, 21-ogo noiabria 1911 g; doklad Vasileostrovskago otdela SRN . . .* (St. Petersburg, 1911), pp. i–iv, 147–52.

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grievances and aspirations. It is revealing that it was, for the most part, conservatives who regarded the URP as a form of right-wing radicalism, people who were fearful of mass politics, afraid that once the masses had been summoned to battle against political liberalism, there might be no turning them away from further attacks on the economic and social order. These fears were justified. The disintegration of the URP after the first years of its existence was the result of much of the membership's inclination to take seriously the populism of the URP and its claim to represent the true Russia and its interests, the true Russia being that of peasants, artisans, and small traders as opposed to that of big business, industry, the stock exchange, international finance, and bureaucracy. But the main point of attack for the URP always remained political liberalism, the façade which capitalism, Jews, and selfish interests of all kinds had erected to do their sinister work. And when political liberalism appeared to be safely contained by firm governmental action, the main body of the URP lost interest in developing an economic and social program that would appeal to the vast majority of Russians—peasants, petty traders, and workmen—who were not very much interested in the forms of politics.

It may be argued that there is no such thing as a radicalism of the Right, that the Right is always and everywhere incapable of developing genuine social and economic appeals. Without debating the essential nature of Italian fascism and German national socialism, it must be conceded that it was not, in the final analysis, with the radicalism of their economic and social programs that Nazis and Fascists outbid communists and socialists. So that even if the URP was not genuinely radical, it might still perhaps be regarded as fascist or national-socialist. These movements rejected, it is true, political *and* economic liberalism and individualism; spoke of the twentieth century as the century of collectivism (Mussolini); denied that private property was an absolute right; demanded that property be made responsible to the community (Hitler); asked for the abolition of incomes not earned by work, the nationalization of trusts, profit-sharing in wholesale trade, land confiscation for communal purposes, measures against usurers, profiteers, and speculators (Program of the National Socialist German Workers' Party, 1920). It is true also that the URP rarely, if ever, spoke of the bourgeois-capitalist order with such unmistakable hostility. But it is not the failure of the URP to draw a sharper line between itself and the old regime in social and economic terms, not its compromises on the agrarian or working-class questions that make the URP ineligible for consideration as the first fascist movement or even as a prototype. Italian fascism and German national socialism, in spite of their denunciations of the bourgeois order, also compromised with it, accepted its support, moderated their egalitarianism, and brought about no revolutionary transformation of the economy. Italian fascism, which at the outset, in its ideological sweep, in the development of corporatism and the idea of the totalitarian state, threatened or promised a radical alteration of Italian society, turned out to be in practice a fairly traditional regime of one-party dictatorship. And even Hitler's state did not reveal the full extent of its radicalism (if criminal nihilism can be called that) until the war years when its energies were directed not

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so much to the reorganization or reformation of German society as to its radical purification and that of most of the continent.

Although both Fascists and Nazis claimed to stand equally against Reds and reaction (in the words of the Horst Wessel song), they, too, like the URP, collaborated on occasion with forces of the old order which they wished to displace—industry, the army, the churches, the monarchy. The difference between them and the URP does not lie primarily in any objective measurements applied to their respective party programs and their radical content but in the differing opportunities which different societies in different stages of historical development presented and the uses which were made of these opportunities.

Italian fascism and German national socialism were radical in the sense that they were broad indictments of their respective societies, their values, and institutions. They addressed themselves not simply to specific issues of politics or economics about which they were purposely vague. They were responses to a deeper malaise of modern civilization, a malaise which Russia had not yet fully felt (as she had not yet experienced its benefits) and which was not borne in upon Europe with full force until after World War I. It was that war that made Europeans question the validity and blessings of the whole complex of political and economic liberalism by which they had lived; it was the war that habituated a whole continent to the practice of violence. It was the war also that created a deep schism between the generation which had come to maturity under its impact and the generation which had held Europe's destiny in its hands when the war began. Nothing after it was ever the same; nothing after it was quite right, least of all in Germany and Italy. The attack fascism and nazism made on the old order was thus made in the name of youth against age, of the new against the old, of the fighters and producers against those who had stayed home and governed badly and profited too well. In Italy and Germany the old order was in disarray, under attack from everywhere. It was easy to proclaim that the twentieth century would be the century of fascism, that national socialism was the wave of the future, that movement toward that future was in itself good. The common perception that the old order was in decay was shared and heightened by men like Mussolini and Hitler, who saw in it their opportunity and were prepared to act on it. Their will to power was not mere rhetoric; their conception of the Fascist and Nazi movements as something essentially novel, not another political party but as *the* political organization and government of the entire nation was, as Mussolini claimed, new to history.

The Union of Russian People, though it too claimed to be not a political party but the expression of a nation's aspirations, of a historical outlook and way of life, was a political party of a much more conventional kind. It arose in response not so much to a crisis of civilization as to fulfil a specific and limited political task. Most Russians were not ready to abandon an experiment which had not yet been tried. They had no perception that the standards and values by which Europe had been governed for almost a century needed thorough replacement. They were still, for the most part, prepared to regard as desirable and beneficial for Russia what Germany and Italy would a decade or two later

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blame for their troubles. They still believed that reform rather than a total upheaval was the answer to their problems. In such a situation, the URP could not claim to speak for youth against age, for an entirely new order against an old one which had shown its failings and deserved only to be swept away. Unable to ride the wave of a future which they could not yet perceive, or to speak in the name of a new historical phase, the men of the URP were condemned to compete in the political arena on the same terms as other political parties, and in that competition they could never be successful. The middle class which might have looked to them as their defenders against peasant and proletarian demands was in Russia neither sufficiently numerous nor sufficiently fearful of threats from that direction to resist substantial concessions and to turn for help to the extreme Right. There were elements to the right of the bulk of the middle classes—large landowners, bureaucrats, some clerics—who saw in the URP a defense of their interests, but who wished that such an ally were not necessary and abandoned it when the regular forces of authority recovered their nerve. Russia seemed to be in a halfway house between authoritarian monarchy and a constitutional representative system where both the older privileged classes and the forces of political and economic liberalism seemed for the moment willing to reside, hopeful that either a balance could be kept or a gradual and cautious transition be made to a fully constitutional regime without opening the floodgates to revolution. In such a situation, extremism found it difficult to operate, and the URP became within three or four years of its foundation precisely the opposite of what it had always claimed to be—a political party in the very narrowest sense of the term, a tool for its leaders to launch themselves into some kind of prominence and prosperity. And none of the leaders of the URP, neither Dubrovin, nor Purishkevich, and least of all Markov, were men of sufficient personal stature, probity, or magnetism to make up for their party's lack of a program.

But for that, they were not alone responsible. They could not become the leaders or the creators of a national revolution as long as the monarchy survived and as long as they proclaimed their loyalty to it and to its head. They might privately chafe under such a restraint, but they had to reckon with it. And that simple yet overwhelming fact deprived them of the possibility and the will of power. Not even their shrill chauvinism, which in a multinational state tended rather to work against than for them, could make up for this fundamental disability. Without the possibility of power, they were also without the dynamism which the struggle for power and the belief of its accessibility confers, a dynamism which more than any program helps to swell the ranks of political movements. Such a dynamism can develop for the Right only when the job of freeing it of the paralyzing embrace of an old regime has already been performed for it, and when it can stand as a new and vital force against the "old" discredited regime of political and economic liberalism, democracy, or socialism. By that test, there could be no fascism or national socialism in tsarist Russia.

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